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HISTORICAL NOTES

Braced for Death?

As they struggled over the stricken President, doctors at Dallas' Parkland Hospital discovered that John F. Kennedy was wearing the rigid, corsetlike brace with which he supported his ailing back. Had Kennedy not worn it that November morning in 1963, he might conceivably be alive today. In Philadelphia last week an assistant counsel of the Warren Commission, Arlen Specter, pointed out that Harvey Oswald's first bullet, which struck the President in the neck, would not have proved fatal. Had J.F.K. not been wearing the brace, he suggested, the impact would probably have knocked him out of the line of fire. As it was, said Specter, "the President's back brace kept him in an erect position so that the second bullet struck him in the head."